

FACT CHECK: President Trump's State of the Union

This week, President Trump gave his first State of the Union address, and it was filled with inaccuracies and it also took credit for the previous Administration's accomplishments. Here is a look at what was said and at the facts:

GOP TAX SCAM

CLAIM: "...Just as I promised the American people from this podium 11 months ago, we enacted the biggest tax cuts and reforms in American history."

REALITY: According to the [Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget](#), the tax cuts as a percentage of gross domestic product would be the 12th largest since 1918. [Politico](#) notes in their analysis that both President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama enacted larger tax cuts.

CLAIM: "Our massive tax cuts provide tremendous relief for the middle class and small businesses... These changes alone are estimated to increase average family income by more than \$4,000."

REALITY: [Factcheck.org](#) debunked this claim and described it as "dubious at best." This figure is based on a report by the White House Council on Economic Advisors and has been [widely criticized](#) by economists across the spectrum. Analysis by the [Tax Policy Center](#) shows that 83% of the tax cuts in the GOP tax law go to the top 1% of Americans.

JOB CREATION AND THE ECONOMY

CLAIM: "Since the election we have created 2.4 million new jobs."

REALITY: President Trump is taking credit for three months of job creation under President Obama. According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), 2017 was the lowest job growth year in six years.

CLAIM: "Unemployment claims have hit a 45-year low. Something I'm very proud of. African-American unemployment stands at the lowest rate ever recorded, and Hispanic American unemployment has also reached the lowest levels in history."

REALITY: It's misleading for President Trump to take credit for declines in African-American and Hispanic employment [when both of these rates have been falling steadily since around 2010](#), early in President Obama's presidency. In fact, the unemployment rate has fallen for African-Americans by one percent from January to December 2017. It fell the same amount in 2016 and even more in 2013, 2014, and 2015 when President Obama was in office.

CLAIM: "After years of wage stagnation, we are finally seeing rising wages."

REALITY: While wages have increased this year under President Trump, they have been on an upward trend since the 1990s, according to [Factcheck.org](#).

CLAIM: "Many car companies are now building and expanding plants in the United States -- something we have not seen for decades. Chrysler is moving a major plant from Mexico to Michigan; Toyota and Mazda are opening up a plant in Alabama. Soon, plants will be opening up all over the country. This is all news Americans are unaccustomed to hearing -- for many years, companies and jobs were only leaving us. But now they are coming back."

REALITY: Chrysler is not moving a car plant from Mexico to the United States. Instead, in 2016, Fiat Chrysler planned to invest \$1 billion and move production of ONE line of vehicles from Mexico to the U.S. According to the [Washington Post](#), Chrysler CEO Marchionne specifically credited talks with the United Auto Workers in 2015 for this move, not President Trump.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DIPLOMACY

CLAIM: “We are also restoring our strength and standing abroad.”

REALITY: A recent [Gallup poll](#) showed that U.S. leadership under President Donald Trump hit a historical low of 30% in 2017 – the single largest one year drop in approval of U.S. leadership, or any other nation, to date.

CLAIM: “In the past, we have foolishly released hundreds of dangerous terrorists, only to meet them again on the battlefield -- including the ISIS leader, al-Baghdadi. So today, I am keeping another promise. I just signed an order directing Secretary Mattis to reexamine our military detention policy and to keep open the detention facilities at Guantánamo Bay.”

REALITY: According to [NPR](#), the U.S. is holding 41 prisoners at Guantánamo Bay, the same number as when Trump entered office. During the Obama Administration, prisoners released from Guantanamo Bay have been subject to a strong vetting process. Guantanamo Bay has resulted in only 8 prosecutions in 15 years, with 3 overturned. According to [Human Rights First](#), U.S. federal courts have successfully prosecuted [620 terrorism](#) suspects at a fraction of the cost.

COMBATTING THE OPIOID CRISIS

CLAIM: “My Administration is committed to fighting the drug epidemic and helping get treatment for those in need.”

REALITY: While President Trump talks about combatting the opioid crisis, his Administration has not requested any federal funds [to combat it](#).

ENERGY

CLAIM: “We are now an exporter of energy to the world.”

REALITY: The United States has been an exporter of many forms of energy, including oil, natural gas, and coal, for years. [ABC News](#) points out that the nation is still a net importer of energy, and has been since 1950.

IMMIGRATION

CLAIM: “Under the current broken system, a single immigrant can bring in virtually unlimited numbers of distant relatives.”

REALITY: Under current law, neither U.S. citizens, nor green card holders, can petition for “distant relatives” to enter the United States. Citizens can sponsor their spouse, parents, or children. These categories often have both numerical limits to sponsorships and a decades-long backlog. A recent [State Department](#) release indicates nearly 4 million people are waiting to get off the list.

CLAIM: “In recent weeks, two terrorist attacks in New York were made possible by the visa lottery and chain migration.”

REALITY: In the two cases President Trump referenced, Sayfullo Saipov and Akayed Ullah, both were radicalized online years after entering the United States, [per NPR](#). Terrorism in the United States and abroad must be confronted, but that doesn’t mean shutting America to all immigrants. The number of immigrants to the U.S. who engage in terrorism is minuscule, while the vast majority of immigrants contribute positively to our nation’s economy and culture. The conservative [CATO Institute](#) found that immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than natives.